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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the intersection where migration and adult learning converge, exploring how a transnational social context of living relates to adults' formal and informal learning experiences. In-depth life-history interviews were conducted with 29 adults participating in two social networks that link the central coast region of California with several areas in Mexico and an urban area in Honduras. Interviewees ranged in age from early 20s to early 80s and included immigrants to California, adult children of immigrants, and individuals in Mexico whose lives have been touched deeply by the migration of close family members and numerous community members. Interview excerpts form the basis of discussion about adult learning experiences in Mexico, decisions and preparations to migrate, the role of social networks and informal learning in the actual move north, formal education (language and citizenship classes) and informal socially based learning in California, and the formation of identities and lives with multiple dimensions and roots in two countries. The findings suggest that linear models of immigration and acculturation must be replaced with more complex analyses of transnational social relations and their role in adults' lives and learning processes. Contains 36 references. (Author/SV)

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Transnational or Immigrant Learners:
Re-drawing the boundaries of socio-cultural context in understanding adult learning

Abstract: This study explores how transnational social dynamics shape the lives of a group of immigrant adult learners in California and adults in Mexico who are linked to California through social networks. Data from in-depth interviews and participant observation with Mexican nationals living in California and in Mexico and who participate in the same transnational social networks point to the need to expand contextual analysis and consider socio-cultural contexts outside of the U.S. in understanding adult learning. This paper argues that linear models of immigration need to be replaced with more complex analyses of transnational social relations so that we can better understand adults' lives and learning processes.

Aprendizes Transnational o Imigrante:
Re-dibujando las fronteras del contexto socio-cultural para comprender el proceso de aprendisaje de adultos

Resumen: Este estudio explora la manera en que las dinámicas sociales y transnationacionales da forma a las vidas de un grupo de adulto imigrantes aprendizes en California y adultos en Mexico quienes estan vinculados con las redes sociales en California. Los datos de entrevistas detalladas y observacion participante con Mexicanos viviendo en California y en Mexico y quienes participan en las mismas redes sociales transnacionales dirigidos a extender el ananisis contextual y considerar contextos socio-cultural afuera de los EEUU para comprender el aprender de adultos. Este papel razona que un analysis mas complejo de relaciones sociales transnacionales debe de sustituir los modelos lineales de imigracion para que podamos entender mejor las vidas de adultos y sus procesos de aprendisaje.

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Transnational or Immigrant Learners:
Re-drawing the boundaries of socio-cultural context in understanding adult learning

I. *Introduction*

This study explores the intersection where migration and adult learning converge. It is an attempt to understand how a transnational social context of living relates to adults' nonformal and informal learning experiences. In-depth, life history interviews, along with some participant observation, were used to learning about the educational experiences and migration experiences of adults in California, Mexico, and Central America, who participate in the same social networks. Through these interviews it became clear how participating in these social networks shapes adults' learning experiences.

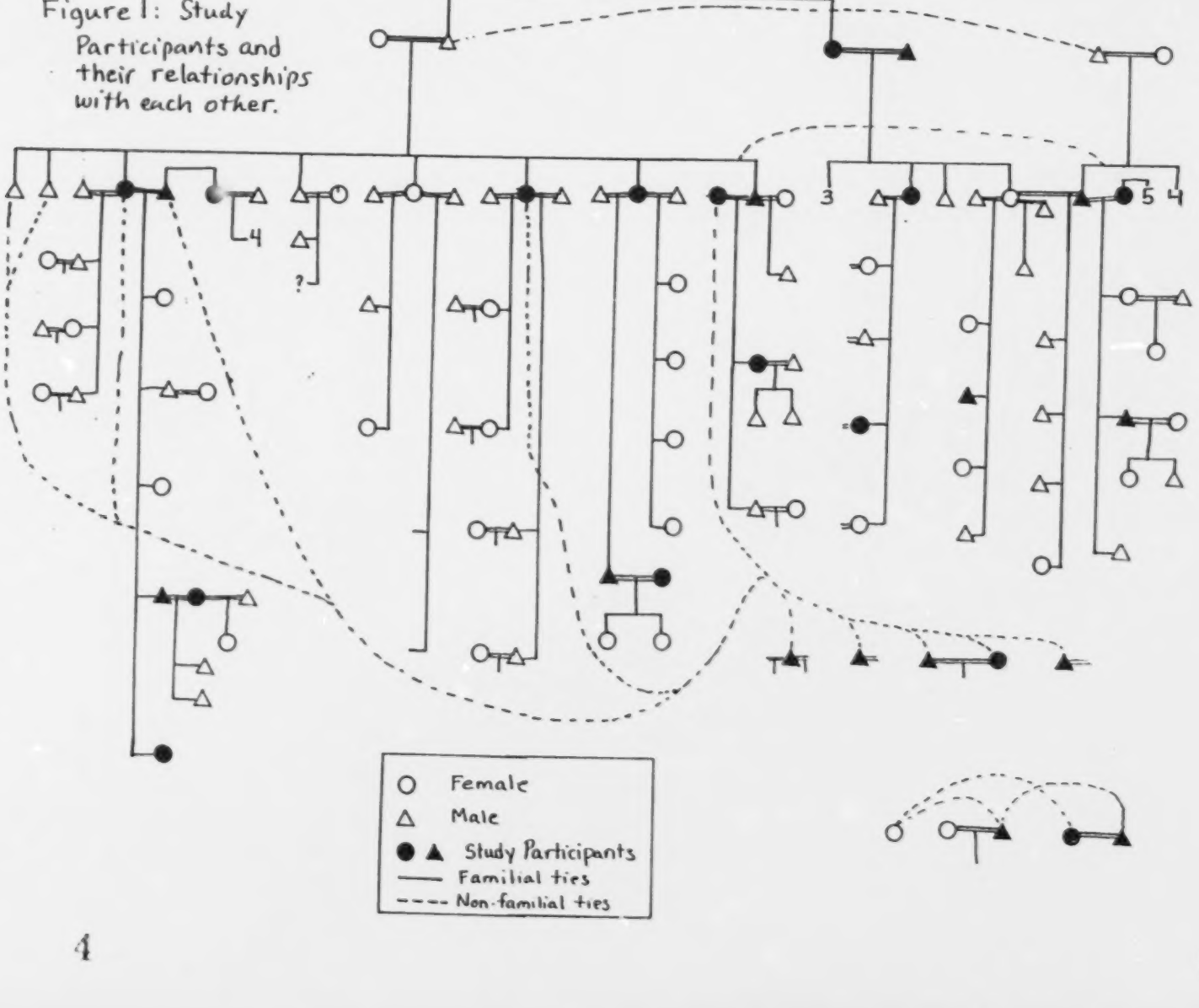
After discussing methodological issues, relevant literature, I will present the findings relating to learning in the contexts of migration phases, discuss those findings, and, in the last section, conclude with a discussion of transnationalism and implications for learning.

II. *Methodology*

This study involves in-depth, life history interviews of 29 adults who participate in one social network that has roots in the central coast area of California and two adjacent areas in the states of Mexico and Morelos, Mexico, or in another social network that links the same central coast area of California with a rural area in the state of Jalisco, Mexico, and with an urban area in Honduras. Participant observation was conducted in the homes and public arenas of a *colonia* (neighborhood) in Morelos and in the homes (during interviews and social visits) and larger celebrations (a wedding and a video of a family reunion) in California. Potential participants were identified through previous interviews because of their involvement with the social network that facilitated migration processes. About half of the interviews were conducted in California, and the other half in Morelos.

Most of the interviews were in Spanish, although two were primarily in English, and one included both English and Spanish. The preferences of the interviewees dictated which language was used and when. Gender representation is approximately equal. Interviewees range in age from early 20s to early 80s, and include immigrants to California, adult children of immigrants, and individuals in Mexico whose lives have been touched deeply by the migration of close family members and/or numerous community members. People were chosen with this variety of circumstances relating to migration in order to elicit talk about how migration has influenced the lives of people differently situated in the same social network, although most participants experienced migration directly. Figure 1 diagrams the social networks, the familial and non-familial relationships.

Figure 1: Study Participants and their relationships with each other.



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Those with solid circles (women) or triangles (men) are those individuals who were interviewed. Other individuals who were observed and spoken with informally are not distinguished on Figure 1 from those mentioned by the principle interviewees as important in their networks. The main purpose of Figure 1 is to give the reader an image of the relationships among the study participants. Many individuals who also participate in the networks of the study participants are not included.

III. *Literature Review*

The socio-cultural context of learners' lives is an important influence in the experiences students have in schools (Cummins, 1986; Delgado-Gaitan, 1987; Delgado-Gaitan and Trueba, 1991; Gibson and Ogbu, 1991; Moll, 1990; Ogbu, 1987, 1982; Ogbu and Matute-Bianchi, 1986; Suarez-Orozco, 1989; Sue and Padilla, 1986; Tharp and Gallimore, 1988). Most of this work is with children in formal schooling situations. Similar studies of adults are recent and few. The exceptions include a study of literacy and social processes in a Hmong community in Philadelphia (Weinstein-Shr, 1994, 1986); power relations between adult language learners and the broader, dominant society (Peirce, 1995); gendered nature of language learning experiences and the relationship between participation in classes with changing gender relations in the home (Rockhill, 1991, 1987); and literacy and language use of Spanish and English within a migration social network in Chicago (Farr and Guerra, 1995; Guerra, 1995).

Migration—directly or indirectly—is an unavoidable aspect of life for the study's participants and is manifested in various processes of migration and in the social relations among those with whom they interact. Migration processes include phases of *separation* from the original social group or society, *transition* to the new area, and *incorporation* into the new social group or society (Chavez, 1992). For Mexican immigrants to the U.S., return migration, and other cyclical or temporary processes are also common (Chavez 1992, p. 4, citing Portes & Bach, 1985, and others). The lines between the phases of separation, transition, and incorporation are blurred and fluid. Migration between Mexico and the U.S. has a long history; is not a linear, simple process; and is not always characterized by permanent settlement in the U.S. with a breaking of ties to Mexico. A deeper understanding of the complexity of life during migration processes and within the social spheres that facilitate this process is important.

Social networks are created from interpersonal connections and are an important site in which migration processes are facilitated (Massey et al., 1987). The connections among people within the networks are typically based on kinship, friendship, having in common communities of origin, and sometimes membership in voluntary organizations (Massey et al., 1987). Various types of social network connections reflect economic, social, personal, and cultural linkages (Massey, 1991; Massey et al., 1987). As the social network becomes more transnational in context—as these various linkages become more important in the new setting but retain their force in maintaining connections with the community of origin—its members explore new ways to organize and live their lives; this then affects education and learning experiences.

Studies of migration and social networks that facilitate those processes have recently pointed to experiences that are not linear and final, such as traditional notions of immigration. Concepts such as "circular migration," "return migrants" and "sojourners" suggest processes that link two locations and that are dynamic as opposed to static. "Transnational" is used to avoid the bi-polar views of migration (Basch, Schiller, Szanton Blanc, 1994; Kearney, 1991, 1995a, 1995b; Rouse, 1989, 1991, 1992; Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton, 1992) which are an "inadequate representation of much contemporary migration" (Kearney, 1995a, p. 227). Basch, Schiller, and Szanton Blanc (1994) define "transnationalism" as:

> ... the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement. We call these processes transnationalism to emphasize that many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders. Immigrants who develop and maintain multiple relationships—familial, economic, social, organizational, religious, and political—that span borders we call "transmigrants." An essential element of transnationalism is the multiplicity of involvements that transmigrants' (sic) sustain in both home and host societies. ... Transmigrants take actions, make decisions, and develop subjectivities and identities embedded in networks of relationships that connect them simultaneously to two or more nation-states. (p. 7)

This paper looks at how learning is implicated in processes of transnationalism.

Educational experiences are some of the mechanisms that help to shape the nature of the social processes of separation, transition, and incorporation (Chavez, 1992; Wallace, 1986); the creation, maintenance, and alteration of the social networks in transnational communities (Massey, et al., 1987); and the gendered processes of settlement (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994). Language learning processes are commonly engaged in by people in transnational communities, although these are not the only type of learning that is important. Language and literacy use relates to the social relations within social networks (Farr and Guerra, 1995; Weinstein-Shr, 1994, 1986) in that language and literacy abilities are often shared resources. Roles within social networks sometimes determine who learns and uses which skills. As transnational network social dynamics and relations are transformed over time and in different locales, so too are learning experiences re-shaped and re-defined.

IV. *Findings and Discussion*

This section presents and discusses the findings of this study in relation to learning and phases of migration. Following two short sections that provide contextual information on (A) learning in Mexico and (B) migrating to the north, the focus of this section is on (C) adult learning experiences in during phases of migration to California.

A. *Learning in Mexico.*

Learning experiences in Mexico during adulthood falls into three categories: (1) basic education and Spanish literacy, (2) work-related education, and (3) learning for purposes of political activism and social change. For the interviewees, these learning experiences were focused on issues relevant to life in Mexico. Learning as preparation for migration arose only once. Delia attended an English course in anticipation of following her father to California; this will be discussed in a later section. Also discussed later are several unintended consequences of learning, which were "push" factors for migration. Participation in social movements in Mexico and Honduras became a source of harassment when political powers changed. Carmen, Paco, and Lilia left their communities to avoid that harassment.

B. *Migration to the North.*

Migration to the U.S. began to be a part of life for the interviewees during the late 1950s. The participants in this study are linked to one of two broad social networks that facilitated migration directly for each study participant. These two networks are then linked together through various kinds of relationships. The two migration networks and the related migration stories are as follows. The network configurations are diagrammed in Figure 1.

The earliest migration stream within the networks involves the Delgado family. One of Victor Delgado's brothers came as a *bracero* (temporary agricultural worker under contract to a farmer in the U.S.) in the late 1950s. Victor wanted to follow but wasn't able to until he came finally in 1968 with his new wife, Elena.

Ricardo Salas and Rodolfo Pedrazo came independent of each other in the 1960s to work in agriculture. Carmen Pedrazo came in 1974 to join her husband who had come as a *bracero*. She is the only interviewee in this study to have obtained legal documentation prior to immigrating; She persisted for 11 years in Tijuana while trying to arrange legal immigration. She didn't want to enter without documentation. Ricardo Salas and the Pedrazo family represents one social network in this study. The Delgados and the Morales families were connected in Mexico and reconnected in California; they are part of the same social network.

The first to immigrate from the Morales family was Delia's father who was brought by an employer in the 1960s. Then, Delia came in 1975, facilitated by her father; Paco, her husband, followed within months. They brought their young children with them when they came. Paco was then instrumental in facilitating the immigration of his sister, Lilia (in 1977), his friend's son, his nephew, Rafael Lucero Morales (in 1978), and Julio Flores (in 1981). Paco and Lilia were fleeing political repression in relation to the struggle to acquire land in the *colonia*. Rafael then brought the rest of his family--four sisters and their mother--during the late 1980s and 1990s. Similarly, Lilia, with Paco's help, facilitated the migration of her four children (first her younger sons, then her grown daughters), and also some of Patricia's children.

Paco and Victor have independently facilitated the immigration of children from other unions. Victor's oldest son has then since brought his other siblings (full- and half-brothers and sisters), including Francisco.

Several study participants have not immigrated for any length of time, but have come for shorter, more temporary periods. Antonio lived in Chicago for a year. Ramiro came to Santa Barbara for a few months, didn't like it and returned to the *colonia*. Patricia came to California at her sons' urging for medical treatment, which they paid for. This description of the migration relations are presented to demonstrate that migration is a social activity that involves many people beyond the individual migrating. The social relations that underlie these processes are also used for other purposes, including education and learning. The next section looks at learning experiences during adulthood during and after migration.

C. *Adult Learning Experiences in California.*

Learning as adults has continued for all of the interviewees regardless of where they currently live. Everyone expressed beliefs that all people learn throughout their lives. Similar learning situations were identified by the interviewees in relation to migration processes. Some of these are informal and occur through participating in social networks: finding out about resources (housing, jobs, childcare, etc.) in the new locale and learning about cultural expectations at work and in dealing with landlords were commonly mentioned. Nonformal courses were also discussed: English-as-a-second-language (ESL) courses, amnesty-related courses[1], job-skill training courses and the like. This sub-section presents the phases of migration in conjunction with learning experiences that took place during the same time periods. Different types of learning experiences during the various phases of migration were identified by the participants, and so will be presented in this way, after a brief description of migration phases.

The social processes that facilitate migration operate in conjunction with other changing social dynamics, including those related to education. This is a dialectical relationship in which social processes influence the types of educational endeavors people become involved in, and the educational experiences shape the processes involving migration phases and social relations. This paper shows that the migration phases of separation, transition, and incorporation are relevant constructs in that they are identifiable phases in processes of living in multiple countries, and also in relation to educational experiences. In addition, however, these phases are not part of a linear process of acculturation in which these individuals become "Americanized" and loose their Mexican identity. It is a more additive process whereby US influences (cultural values, social ties, etc.) add to a Mexican orientation, producing lives that are transnational in nature.

1. *Separation: Decisions and Preparations to Migrate.* Processes of separation from one's community of residence involve making decisions to migrate, and physically

[1] Amnesty-related courses refer to courses in English and American government that are required for qualificatiion under the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA).

leaving one community to go to another. The ways in which this is done varies widely, and can be related to many factors. While preparing to move to another country could presumably involve preparing oneself through educational endeavors to understand the culture and language in the new locale, this is rare in this study. Most of the learning in this phase is informal in nature, where people talk to each other and learn of others' experiences, make useful social connections, and thereby—relying heavily on the social network—move through the separation process. Typically, stories told by returned migrants included messages about being able to earn money, but also the difficulties of crossing the border and sustaining regular income. These informal communications sometimes stimulated separation processes by giving a rosy picture of the land of abundance, while also providing more realistic information about what to expect.

More organized learning experiences (referred to hereafter as "nonformal") were mentioned by only four interviewees in relation to this phase. These include one situation where nonformal education was used as a preparation for anticipated migration, and three situations in which political activities prompted migration.

In two of these latter situations, learning experiences served as one part of the "push" factors that motivated their immigration to Santa Barbara. Paco and Lilia were both involved in an organized struggle of *campesinos* (peasants) to secure plots of land in the early 1970s. This effort included meetings in which they learned how to organize the community, how to confront governmental forees, and how to address the needs of the new residents. Because this struggle was an armed struggle in which the government targeted their particular family as instigators, they were harassed even after their claims to land had been officially granted. One brother had already been killed and another had disappeared. This harassment directly led to their fleeing the community. They came to Santa Barbara where Paco's father-in-law already resided.

Similarly, Carmen was involved as a teacher during one regime's effort to "nationalize" the indigenous population. Teachers were sent to a contested border area "to teach the Misquito Indians how to dress, because they wore loin cloths" ("a enseñarles a los Misquitos, que son los indios de alla, a vestirse porque andaban con taparrapo."). The teachers taught them about hygiene (a darles higiene"), to clothe themselves ("a darles ropa"), to teach them to cook ("a enseñarles a cocinar"), and to build houses out of bamboo and stoves from stones and mud. Twenty-five teachers worked together. "It was like a mission [where we would] teach them to read and write [in Spanish] and teach them that that was Honduras." ("Era como una mision ... enseñarles a leer y escribir y enseñarles que esa era Honduras.") When the government changed, those involved—including Carmen—were deemed suspect and had to leave the country. ("Cuando entró el partido contrario ... tuvé que salir del pais.") Interestingly, she feels that being a professional was detrimental.

Estuvé tiempo sin trabajar porque desgraciadamente alla la politica lo perjudica a uno; alla no sirve ser profesional.	I was without work for a time because, unfortunately, politics there are detrimental to a person; there it doesn't pay to be professional.

In contrast to these political influences that prompted migration, migration is sometimes a more deliberate and planned action. One would think that in such premeditated actions, learning processes would be central, including nonformal education (NFE). NFE was generally not a tool used in anticipation of migration in this study, except in one situation. Only one interviewee—Delia—reported having attended an English course in Mexico prior to migrating. Her father had already migrated with his employer, seemed to foresee her subsequent migration, and so paid for an English course during Delia's adolescence.

Mi papa me mandaba de aqui [California] dinero y fui a una escuela estudiar ingles. Estudié un año cuando tenia como 15 años. Y, me servió porque de alli, cuando ya me vine para aca, se me hizo mas facil encontrar trabajo, porque ya sabia yo un poquitito.	My father sent me money from here [California] and I went to a school to study English. I studied one year when I was about 15 years old. And, it served me because from that, when I came from there, it make it easier to find work, because I already knew a little.

She looks back on that experience as having helped to orient her to live in California, but her language acquisition was not adequate to enable her to communicate very well in English at that time.

a. *Discussion: Separation Phase and Learning.* Few learning experiences were mentioned by the study participants during the phase of separation. Most that were mentioned during this phase were informal in nature. Political activism, which involved a learning process, combined with changes in government regimes, led to repressive situations in which Carmen, Paco, and Lilia felt they had to leave their communities in Mexico and Central America in order to survive. The learning processes then, that these individuals engaged in in order to participate in political and social movements, were politically charged situations in the eyes of others.

The only experience of nonformal education during the phase of separation was that of Delia. Her father anticipated her imminent migration and so paid for and encouraged her to take an English course in Mexico. No other interviewees identified any such deliberate learning processes in anticipation of migration or in the period of separating oneself from the original community.

NFE during separation, then, can be seen as a rare but deliberate experience. The informal learning that occurred in relation to separation processes, on the other hand,

were unintentionally linked to forces that encouraged separation. The political learning that Carmen, Lilia, and Paco discussed was not planned for purposes related to migration, but instead unintentionally led to separation because of the political environment at that time.

2. *Transition: Moving North.* The transitional phase is defined here as the actual movement from one place to another, and the initial period of time one spends in getting settled in the new community. This reflects mental processes of re-orienting oneself from life in one geographical context to another. As with the separation phase, most of the adult learning here is informal. The social networks in which people are involved facilitate the meeting of their basic needs in areas such as housing, jobs and schooling for children. Nonformal educational endeavors were rarely engaged in by the participants in this study, and even then NFE involvement was short-term. ESL, which is assumed by many educators to be an initial and immediate need during this phase, was not usually a priority for the interviewees until much later.

The need for NFE was expressed by one person, Ricardo, who has defined a role for himself as a conduit in the social network whose job is to assist newcomers getting oriented to their new surroundings. Because of his function in this capacity, he has developed a strong opinion about educational needs in the community of newcomers. He identifies a need for "orientation" programs that would help people find jobs and also other kinds of services and solutions to basic needs. Educational needs are part of his recommendations. He sees a need for a social service approach to teaching people how to find needed resources (housing, jobs, educational services, information, etc.) and how to survive in their new community. He sees recently arrived women immigrants to be in a particularly precarious situation:

... la mujer ... es la que principalmente necesita mas ayuda, porque mucha mujer... como nosotros, la raza latina, somos muy machistas, la mujer pobrecita, es mas timida ¿ve? Por eso, a veces que esta mujer se divorcia o se deja con el esposo no le queda mas remedio que irse al welfare, porque no hay quien la oriente para ir a agarrar un trabajo o para otra cosa.

... muchas mujeres, en primero lugar, no saben ingles, estan atontadas, no hay quien les diga.

... the woman ... is the one that needs the most help, because many women ... like us, the Latin race, we're very "machistas", the poor woman, she's more timid, you see? Because of that, at times if this woman gets divorced or leaves her spouse there isn't another option other than going on welfare, because there is no one to help her to go get a job or whatever else.

... many women, in the first place, don't speak English, there're stunned, there's no one to tell them.

I asked him whether women talk to other women to find out about options for housing, work, schooling, or whatever they need. He said:

No hay a quien se lo piden. Si hay, pero hace falta como que uno le hable a la gente, hacerlo que tenga confianza, porque ahorita muchos de los que no tienen papeles, estan escondiendose todo el tiempo.	There's no one to ask. There is, but there isn't anyone to talk to the people, make it so they have confidence because now many of those that don't have papers are hiding themselves all the time.

He went on to tell me about problems of prostitution because of lack of other options, and a lack of power that women have in relation to men. He felt that:

...la mujer a veces no desarrolla por el motivo de que la tenemos como asustada y no hay quien la ayude.	...the woman at times doesn't improve because we have her frightened and there is no one to help.

He spoke of problems of alcohol and resulting violent treatment of women by men.[2] While he saw access to social services and education as important needs, he also identified an urgent need to address the fear relating to California's Proposition 187[3] and related immigrant-bashing. He sees educational opportunities as a place where social connections can be formed, and as a vehicle to address some of the social problems in the community. He talked about nonformal education related to ESL and job training, but he also sees a need for consciousness raising and critical reflection of life and the American social system. He feels fairly successful in directing newcomers to existing services, but is unsure how to challenge the inequitable social system. He felt that 80 percent of the people who he has helped over the years have been able to "better themselves" through educational avenues.

Ricardo defines "educational avenues" as including taking courses through adult education or Catholic Charities, at the community college, or through self-directed education. Extensive reading has been his own personal way to develop his intellectual capacities. He reads anything in Spanish he can get his hands on. Although his speaking abilities in English are near fluent, he feels his ability to read in English is less developed. While he does read some in English, most of his reading is in Spanish. He reads various magazines as well as books about politics and history.

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[2] He tended to talk of women immigrants as if they were passive beings without the possibility of expressing any human agency. While this view is a generalization, I choose here not to address the way he views women but to acknowledge the difficulty that women without the social capital that is valued in Santa Barbara have in these political times.

[3] Proposition 187, an attempt to curb illegal immigration by denying public benefits including health care and education to undocumented immigrants, was passed by the voters. Implementation has not occurred due to the new law being the focus of legal suits which are currently pending.

The interviewees who migrated as adolescents—Leticia and Rafael—attended a public high school upon arrival. Leticia had also attended primary school in Santa Barbara, but had then moved back to Mexico during early adolescence. Rafael, who arrived with no knowledge of English, reported that he learned it quickly in the high school, which he attended for about one and one-half years. He sought out other English-speakers at the expense of being ostracized and ridiculed by other Spanish-speakers. He was perceived as abandoning others similarly situated. Leticia, who had learned English while in primary school, reported that both periods of attending public schools in Santa Barbara were major influences in helping her to transition from life in Mexico to life in Santa Barbara. She now feels that Santa Barbara is home and Mexico is a "nice place to visit."

Legal status is important during this phase in relation to engaging in educational pursuits. Nearly all interviewees are either undocumented or were undocumented until acquiring legal status through the amnesty program. As legal status often reflects orientations and attitudes about settlement (when one is in a precarious legal status, one tends not to think in terms of permanent settlement), one is left to wonder whether educational patterns would be different with people whose legal status is more secure during this transitional phase. Carmen, who arrived with legal status (and as a trained teacher), has been involved with many NFE programs in Santa Barbara, including several ESL classes, during this early period of transition. In later years (during a later migration phase), after obtaining legal status, more interviewees participated in NFE.

a. *Discussion: Transition Phase and Learning.* Like the earlier phase of separation, the transition phase includes much informal learning but little nonformal learning experiences. Several people did attend ESL courses for short periods of time, with the intention to acquire English skills to make interactions with English speakers easier and more possible. These courses were short-lived during this period, however, with more pressing needs taking priority. The need for another form of NFE was identified by one interviewee. He felt that a more organized, systemic approach to helping newcomers locate needed resources and services, and learn about what is available and how to access it, would be invaluable. Such an effort would need to take into account the isolation of many of the newcomers, both because of limited English proficiency, and physical isolation, which is increasingly a strategy to avoid being detected as undocumented and to avoid immigrant-bashing. Creating a NFE program to serve this population would indeed be a challenge.

3. *Incorporation: Establishing Ties in the North.* The incorporation phase reflects a shift in the frame of reference toward longer term U.S. residency (legal or not) and stronger links to the new community, as well as shifts in identity and cultural norms to some degree. The interviewees in this study have taken a variety of paths toward defining and developing integration into the Santa Barbara community. Some, whose orientation to Mexico remains strong, resist incorporation into the Santa Barbara community outside of the social networks that operate within their original (migration) social networks and other similar immigrant networks. Others, who have formed relationships beyond those original network boundaries, have expanded their

integration into the local community, sometimes at the expense of the original network ties, and sometimes as an expansion of those relations. The following presentation of data addresses broad issues of incorporation or integration into the Santa Barbara community, and focuses on how learning impacts or shapes the integration processes. The experiences of Paco, Lilia, and Julia Morelos; Carmen Pedraza, Ricardo Salas, Rafael Lucero (Paco's nephew); and Victor and Elena Delgado will be used to illuminate these patterns. Along with integration, experiences in informal and nonformal learning will be presented and discussed.

Paco Morales. A fairly strong orientation toward Mexico informs Paco's relationship to the Santa Barbara community and to NFE. In many conversations and observations with Paco, particularly those that took place in Mexico, it became obvious that his position in his *colonia* in Mexico motivates him to continue cultivating social ties there and discourages him from expanding his social sphere in Santa Barbara beyond the immigrant community. He is somewhat of a local hero in his *colonia*, where he was one of the founders of the community in a struggle that took the life of one brother and instigated the disappearance of another. He knows many of the residents--all of the founding members who remain--and has *compadrazgo* ties (reciprocal relations or godparent relations) with many. Many community residents openly appreciate the efforts of his brothers, and, by association, perform favors and extend their appreciation to him. Many people expressed to me their appreciation of his family's work in securing land for them to live on.[4] Through the elevated stature that Paco enjoys in the community, his connections to this community of origin continue and are strengthened. In contrast, his incorporation into the community in Santa Barbara has been mostly within the Mexican immigrant community. With the exception of obtaining professional services (e.g. legal or medical services), his activities involve other immigrants as well as his extended family members. As will become evident in the later discussion of Paco's network affiliations, tensions arise in this arena with family members who are less oriented toward Mexico and are pursuing more integration in the Santa Barbara community.

With regard to educational pursuits, Paco tends to avoid ESL and other NFE in Santa Barbara because he views his life as outside of the sphere of influence of these educational efforts. In talking about language, he said that he didn't know why he

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[4] While it could be argued that, because it was Paco who introduced me to other colonia residents, and in many of the introductory conversations, he mentioned that I was interested in the history of the colonia (among other things), the residents assumed that I wanted to hear appreciatiative remarks about the Morales family and their role in the colonia's history. Further, it would have been considered rude, after knowing that I knew Paco, to then speak negatively of him or his family to me. Sincerity was evident in the interviews, observations, and conversations that I had in the colonia, however, and, while I'll never know whether some of the comments were exaggerated or not, I am confident that the general messages of appreciation and respect were genuine. This relationship between Paco and colonia residents is generational in nature, however. Succeeding generations don't share the personal memories of struggling to legitimize their land, and residents who have come to the colonia after that struggle undoubtedly don't share the same feelings and relationship. Because I spoke mostly with founding members or family members of Paco in the research done in Mexico, the data is limited to reflect the views of these categories of residents.

would want to learn more English—he expects to return to Mexico where he wouldn't need it.

> A lo mejor si [las clases que ofrecen son] importante, a lo mejor cometi un error de no querrer ir a la escuela aqui, para aprender ingles, pero, pues digo, si me voy a mi tierra para que necesito...
>
> Maybe yes, [the classes that they offer are] important, maybe I made a mistake by not wanting to go to school here, to learn English, but, well, if I go to my land, what do I need it for...

Lilia Morales. Paco's sister, Lilia, also shares this perspective. Because of her desire to return to Mexico, she sees little purpose in learning English or other skills that would further her incorporation in Santa Barbara. She is nearing 60 years old, has a job which she has held for over a decade and which allows her a month off to return home annually. Her ties in Santa Barbara are with her children and grandchildren, and other relatives primarily. English would not directly enhance those relationships or her job.

This language situation is not without conflict, however. Although she does not identify English as a high priority in her life, she does feel lack of English fluency does present difficulties. Lilia explains how in Mexico ("alli"/"there") language difficulties do not exist, but in California ("aqui"/"here") they do:

> Siente uno, pues, como el, como la rana que la avientan al agua, ... alli es su casa. Y alla es feliz. Aqui somos felices, pero siempre andamos pensando en eso.
>
> One feels, well, like the frog that is thrown into the water, ... there is its home. And there it's happy. Here we're happy, but we always go around thinking about this.

> Entonces, siempre anda uno asi, como una problema que tal vez es un poco psicologico ... Pero, la verdad es de que uno no sabe si la vayan a entender o no.
>
> So then, one always goes around like that, like a problem that maybe is a little psychological ... But, the truth is that one doesn't know if they're going to understand you or not.

She goes on to talk about not being understood and how frustrating that can be.

Es la verdad de que uno no sabe si la vayan a entender o no. Y asi a mi me ha pasado muchas veces que yo hablo con la persona y luego a veces, pues, como no se yo hablar muy bien el ingles, a veces, se quedan pensando, "¿que me dijo?" Y tengo que repetirme unas tres o cuatro veces para que ya sepa que le estoy diciendo.

Its true that one doesn't know if they're going to understand you or not. And that has happened to me many times, that I speak with a person and then at times, well, like I don't know how to speak English very well, at times, they keep wondering, "What did she tell me?" And I have to repeat myself three or four times so that they know what I am saying.

Lilia said she attended only one English course in California, and that was required for amnesty. She attended for the required 40 hours, enjoyed the social interactions, but said she didn't learn much English.

¡No aprendí! *Pero,* me divertia porque, pues, platicabamos con todos, ... que estaban yendoles para arreglar sus documentos. Era mucha gente que la que iba y pues platicabamos, que como era la vida, y que, como en este pais, de tener un documento, tenemos que ir a la escuela, lo que los imponen.

I didn't learn anything! *But* I had fun, because, well, we chatted with everyone, ... what they were going to fix their documents. There were many people who went, well, we talked, about how life was, and that, like in this country, to have a document, we have to go to school, that's what they impose on us.

Lilia's lack of interest in learning more English and her continuing orientation toward Mexico are being challenged by her children and grandchildren who are fairly well-established in and oriented toward Santa Barbara. They don't understand why she cares about her "life" in Mexico, and why she continues to go home for one month every year. She feels that her life's work is manifested in her home in Mexico and she feels sad that her children don't seem to feel so attached to their country or community of origin. When I asked her whether her children (now parents themselves) return to their first home periodically, she replied in a voice that signaled this as a touchy family issue:

¡No! Ellos nunca van! ¿Eh? Ellos no van. Los muchachos, el tiempo que tienen aqui, uno ha ido una vez, y el otro ha ido otra vez. Nada mas. Mi hija, la que se vino en [19]90, ha ido una vez. Y la otra, una sola vez ha ido.

No! They never go! Eh? They don't go. The boys, the time that they've been here, one has gone once, and the other has gone once. No more. My daughter, the one who came in [19]90, she has gone once. And the other one has only gone one time.

I asked why she thought they didn't go more often. I knew their father was there.

Como dice ella [mi hija], "¿A que voy? Aqui a ti te tenemos. ¿Que voy a buscar? Si tu estuvieras alla, entonces, bueno, pues, vamos a ver a mi madre, alli esta. Pero te tenemos aqui."

Like she [my daughter] says, "Why should I go? We have you here. What would I look for? If you were there, well then, good, let's go see my mother, she's there. But we have you here."

Lilia then asked me rhetorically, "¿Que puedo yo hacer si asi me contesta?" (What can I do if that's how they answer me?) And, she continued:

Los muchachos igual. "Pero mama, si aqui tenemos todo, que vamos a hacer a Mexico?"

The boys are the same. "But mom, if we have everything here, why should we go to Mexico?"

Without my asking another question, she told me her response:

Pues, yo he pensado que ... que esta mal. ... quieran or no quieran, alla es su pais de ellos, y tienen que regresar. Lo poco que yo he trabajado alla, lo tengo. Entonces, les he dicho, "Bueno, que el dia que yo me muera, quien vaya a cuidar lo que esta alla? ¿Lo van a dejar alla abandonado para que otra gente se aproveche de lo que he tanto de trabajar? ¿O que? ¿Que piensan?" "No, no ma, será otra cosa. Vamos a tener madre por mucho tiempo." ¡Es lo que dicen!

Yo puedo irme para alla, y yo puedo mantenerme alla... pero ahora aqui estan mis hijos.

Therefore, I have thought that... that it's bad. ... [whether] they like it there or not, it's their country, and they have to return. The little that I have worked (for) there, I have. So then, I have said to them, "Good, so the day I die, who is going to take care of what is there? Are you going to leave it there abandoned so that other people benefit from all of my work? Or what? What do you think?" "No, no, mom, it'll be another way. We'll have a mother for a long time." That's what they say!

I can go there, and I can take care of myself there... but now my kids are here.

What direction this challenge will take her is as yet unclear. Will she retire to Mexico, or will she become resigned to live in Santa Barbara with her children? As with Paco, Lilia was involved with the land acquisition struggle in their *colonia* and feels a strong emotional attachment to that history and locale.

Julia Morales. Lilia's and Paco's sister, Julia, shares their feelings of being "pulled" by children to Santa Barbara, creating a tension with her own preference to return to Mexico. Like her siblings, Julia has a home in Mexico, although it is not in the *colonia* but in the capital city (Distrito Federal, or DF). Like her siblings, Julia has also not until now engaged in much NFE. She presently (during Spring 1996) attends ESL and electronic assembly courses through adult education in Santa Barbara. These are fairly intensive 6-month courses which meet 5 days per week for about 3 hours each (6 hours total per day). As with Lilia's amnesty-required classes, though, she is, at least in part, motivated by external structural factors. These courses are part of a "rehabilitation benefit" due her in relation to a work injury she sustained.[5] Julia receives basic sustenance payments from the insurance company while she attends the classes. This financial support, along with the time availability due to her inability to do her previous type of work, and the provision of free classes and monitoring by the insurance company, create a situation that is conducive to and encourages (indeed almost requires) NFE participation. While she expressed appreciation of being able to attend

[5] Worker's compensation benefits often include payment by insurance companies for courses or training necessary to return an injured worker to a job consistent with the physical limitations caused by the work-related injury.

the classes, she felt the assembly course was badly taught and she didn't see herself obtaining work as an assembler. She enjoyed her ESL class, however. The most definitive reason given was the lack of "discrimination"[6] and the variety of countries represented in the classroom.

> A mi me gusta mucho ese programa. Esta muy bien porque ahi no hay descriminacion. Ahi hay de muchos paises, de muchos paises hay estudiantes. Y pienso que eso esta muy bien. La educacion ahi... Ese plantel educativo esta muy bien.
>
> I like that program a lot. It is real good because there there is no discrimination. There they are from many countries, from many countries there are students. And I think that that is very good. The education there... That education program is very good.

Carmen Pedraza. Carmen represents a different pattern where her particular migration experiences have served to propel her orientation almost exclusively toward Santa Barbara life. While her family "back home" asks her to return, she doesn't seriously considers this an option. Her husband doesn't share the same place of origin, so returning for her would not be a return home for him.

Carmen has the most formal education of the interviewees in this study. She was trained as a teacher in Honduras before migrating to Mexico, and then to Santa Barbara. She has been involved as a learner in an unknown number of adult education ESL classes in Santa Barbara, and has worked as a volunteer and paid teacher's aide in elementary schools helping with Spanish language skills. She was a VISTA Volunteer[7] for three years; there she organized and taught Spanish literacy classes. Although she maintains some ties with relatives in Honduras, she rarely visits them and they have never come to California. Her husband is from Mexico originally. They have no children. In this study it is only Carmen who has become a naturalized American citizen. Her strong desire to belong to the local community and broader culture is reflected in the extensive involvement she has had in NFE situations as well as in the public schools in Santa Barbara. Her changing orientation toward the U.S. appears to be less conflictual than many of the other interviewees.

Ricardo Salas. Ricardo's outlook also represents a less conflictual orientation than Julia's or Lilia's. He has an established gardening business in Santa Barbara area and has raised his children here. He has no thoughts about returning to Mexico to live. While he maintains communication with his community of origin, and helps

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[6] She used the term "discrimination" (discriminación) to refer generally to tensions in society relating to immigrant-bashing and anti-immigration sentiment, tensions between immigrant populations and Mexican-American groups, and between Latinos and Anglos. She did not indicate any specific incidents that have been discriminatory, but feels the pressures of ethnic, class, and gender biases in society. In contrast, she appreciated the cultural diversity in the ESL class, and the communication that occurred among the students. She felt that all students wer treated fairly by the teacher and by other students.

[7] VISTA—Volunteers in Service to America—is a federal program similar to the Peace Corps but where work is done within the U.S.

newcomers from there, he does not return to visit much. He talks of his life as firmly situated in Santa Barbara.

Rafael Lucero Morales. Rafael's situation demonstrates yet another approach to using education as a tool in negotiating transitional and settlement processes. While he shows some desire to return to Mexico at some point in his life, possibly to live, his wife is adamantly not interested in such a possibility. (His wife is a U.S. citizen, raised in Santa Barbara, and born of immigrant parents.) All of Rafael's immediate birth family has migrated to Santa Barbara; his mother (Julia) is interested in returning "home" where she retains her house. Rafael and his wife have made "success" an active goal in their lives. Rafael feels that he should learn to live life in a way that works in this social realm. Therefore he has become more aggressive about making money and adopting new behaviors than have others in this study. This strategy has met with conflict with others in his migration social network (mostly immediate birth family and extended family members) in that they perceive him as abandoning certain cultural values that define life as "Mexican" and exhibiting unappreciated traits ("greed"—in English—he repeatedly mentioned). Changing notions of identity often introduce tensions in cultural and social expectations. Rafael learned this early when he gravitated toward *"gringos"* (North Americans) in high school so he could more quickly acculturate. Others perceived this as betrayal based on "conceit." He wanted to learn English quickly to understand what his teachers talked about.

Educationally, Rafael engages in experiences that reflect his changing identity and class status: "a successful person in America." He and his wife have worked hard, own and run their own business, and own their own home. His involvement subsequent to his early marriage included two attempts to study at a business college, GED classes, a contractor's license course, and several classes related to recreational activities (skiing, sailing, flying, karate). The recreational classes are fairly recent and seem to be related to his association with non-immigrant and middle-class friends; he and his wife explicitly consider themselves "upwardly mobile" and "successful." The GED class was short-lived because of his not wanting it in Spanish. He believes that bilingual education, or classes taught in languages other than English, are a hindrance to advancement. "Instead of helping the community, they're shooting it down," he said. The first, early attempt at business school classes were not successful, he believes, due to his limited English ability. His more recent attempt at the same school was met with not being admitted because he was "overqualified." The school told him that, since he was an entrepreneur, he already knew all that they had to teach, despite his intention to learn computer skills for which they offer courses. He understood that they want students to enroll in their entire program, not take particular classes according to need. He completed the contractor licensing course, despite the difficulty of a four hour commute once weekly for six months. Rafael's English ability now, after 15 years in this community, is quite good, by far better than any other interviewee who migrated after early childhood. He attributes this to the strong support of this in-laws (who migrated much earlier) and wife (who was born here). Rafael, Irene and their children often attend classes—particularly the recreational classes—together as an attempt to strengthen their marriage and family life.

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Victor and Elena Delgado. Victor and Elena Delgado are also attending a class together. They are currently attending citizenship classes in preparation for becoming U.S. citizens. Attending together accommodates Victor's concern about his wife's engaging in independent activities, and it remedies the lack of transportation to classes she would otherwise have. While they are interested in citizenship and permanent settlement, they resist acculturation to a life they feel does not honor the strengths of Mexican cultural traditions. Elena's English ability is minimal; Victor uses English in his work situation only. They work hard to pass their Mexican cultural and language traditions on to their children and grandchildren. NFE, then, has been sporadic, short-term, and primarily in the form of language courses. Because of Elena's short work history, and it being in a fairly isolated situation with only other Spanish speaking women, her English skills have not developed through exposure and use at work as have Victor's. While their own language and cultural behaviors are not actively pursuing acculturation, they feel that their efforts in settling here will benefit their children and grandchildren. One example both Victor and Elena gave is the better educational opportunity their children have had here as opposed to what would have been available in Mexico.

a. *Discussion: Migration Phases and Learning.* As we have seen, various phases of migration relate to somewhat different forms of adult learning. During the separation phase, little education is mentioned, although much learning takes place through informal means within social networks. Similarly, during the phase of transition, most of the learning is informal and in response to needs that arise in the new location and to meeting basic needs for housing, food, and the like. NFE was used as a strategy only rarely during this phase, mostly in language courses for short periods of time. Language and other NFE courses offered in this California community were not considered by these study participants to be integral to the initial processes of establishing life in California. We saw that there could be a need for a more systematic, organized approach to learning for purposes of finding housing and jobs, enrolling children in schools, and other initial needs for orientation to a new environment and interactions with people outside of the original social network.

Learning during the phase of integration is much more intertwined with identity, cultural change, and re-constructing relationships to communities of origin while constructing relationships to communities of residence. Lilia and Julia both expressed strong desires to return to Mexico and feel that they will retire in Mexico. For both, however, this desire is made complex by their children becoming increasingly established in Santa Barbara and not wanting to return to Mexico themselves. Both women feel the struggle between their own preferences and their children's. Additionally, both women framed the discussion of their learning experiences in California as related to legal or bureaucratic requirements. Lilia attended ESL because it was required for amnesty. Julie attended ESL and electronics training because it was offered and encouraged as part of a benefit due her. She saw little connection between this job and language training and her future work. Both women talked at length about the social benefits of participating in ESL classes, despite the minimal language acquisition they felt they gained. The opportunities to talk with other, presumably

similarly situated women and men was a benefit of attending ESL classes. Julia also identified the egalitarian experiences of diversity within the classroom that she appreciated.

Carmen, Ricardo, and Rafael are much more oriented toward Santa Barbara than toward their communities of origin. Carmen and Ricardo immigrated as adults, maintain communication with their original communities but do not visit much, and have established multiple and varied ties to the Santa Barbara community. Ricardo's spouse and children are in California, although not in the immediate area. Carmen has no children to tie her to Santa Barbara, but because her husband does not share the same community of origin, "going home" for one is not "going home" for the other. Both Carmen and Ricardo felt that their roles as teachers have been important, Carmen to help with Spanish language development, and Ricardo to help facilitate adjustment processes of newcomers. In terms of their own learning processes, Carmen has taken numerous ESL classes, while Ricardo has turned to reading for self-directed learning processes. Both have expanded their social networks to include a wide variety of people, Latinos and non-Latinos, and people of the lower and middle classes. These relationships have been an important source of informal learning for both.

Rafael migrated later than Carmen and Ricardo, and so has been in Santa Barbara less time, but he came at an earlier age: fifteen or so. He attended a local public high school and used that experience to "learn English" and "find a wife," both of which he has done. His spouse has facilitated Rafael's expanding his social network to include more middle-class members, and more non-immigrants. Although his in-laws themselves migrated, they are well-established in the area and have been instrumental in helping Rafael and Irene buy a home, build a successful landscaping business, and make some long-term financial investments. Learning activities reflect this change in the configuration of his social network and the inclusion of more middle-class and mainstream influences. Recreational classes and obtaining licensing and learning skills related to self-employment have predominated. He participates in many of the recreational classes with his children and spouse, and with friends. Recreational classes are used by Rafael both as a means to acquire cultural capital (to learn to participate in activities of the middle class), and as a vehicle to build relationships both with his family and with friends.

Victor and Elena also consider themselves fairly rooted to Santa Barbara. Instead of expanding their social network to a more diverse population, they have strengthened the ties to their extended family members and have incorporated *compadres* and the parents of their daughter- and son-in law into their network. They have attempted to maintain traditional values, such as those governing gender roles and parental authority, in part by minimizing close relationships with people of different backgrounds. Economically, however, they have pursued integration, through Victor joining a union and seeking stable employment, and through investing in a home. The role of NFE in this process and in the social relations in their network has been minimal. Each has participated in ESL classes a few times, often together in the same classes. Elena has been motivated in part by wanting to alleviate her isolation in the home

through increasing her ability in English and through engaging in social interactions with others in the classes. Although she has met with some spousal resistance to her ability to attend classes, she continued to push for this, and eventually was not so restricted in her mobility. These social relations, however, have not continued outside of classes. Victor's desires to attend ESL classes have been short-lived, and decreased as his use and learning of English at work increased. Both Victor and Elena seem to have resigned themselves to living out their lives in California for the benefits of their children. Especially Elena feels that, personally, she would prefer to return to Mexico where she still has some family members and is better able to communicate with a broader range of people. Their children were born in California, have lived there all their lives, and have no intentions of moving to Mexico. They are well-established in California and see not reason to consider moving. Elena is now trying to help her grandchildren with their Spanish language development through using Spanish with them in the home. In summary, even though there are some conflicting and ambivalent feelings about remaining in California, both Victor and Elena have decided that that is the best option, particularly for their children's and grandchildren's benefit. They have pursued strategies of strengthening economic ties, encouraging their children to continue their educations at the local community college and university, and, at the same time, instilling what they consider traditional Mexican values in their children, and serving as a resource for language development in Spanish for their grandchildren.

We can see yet a different pattern in Paco's life. He has extended his social network significantly in terms of the number of individuals with whom he interacts and feels are important in his life. He is quite social in his activities, including being a central figure in a CB radio club which meets weekly for radio and social purposes. He feels that his "social network" now consists of both friends and family members, in approximately equal numbers. While he has expanded his social network to include many friends, these friends tend to be from similar backgrounds: people of limited economic means who have come to the Santa Barbara area from various parts of Mexico. Some have steady employment, but many rely on temporary or sporadic, often informal sector work. In contrast to Rafael's network expansion, which includes relatives of his in-laws and friends who are more middle-class in lifestyle, Paco's network is fairly homogeneous in terms of economic class and orientation toward Mexico. In addition, Paco feels strong ties to the *colonia* as well as to Santa Barbara. Like Lilia, the history of struggle and his family's involvement have created strong emotional desires to stay connected. Relations within the *colonia* encourage those desires; the contributions of Paco's family—and by association Paco—are openly appreciated and the basis for continuing relations with many people who have not left the *colonia*. This situation, combined with the difficulty of obtaining more lucrative work in California which would improve living conditions there, and concern about negative influences from more assimilated Latinos and Anglos, continue to direct his orientation toward Mexico. On the other hand, his immediate family is now settled in California, and his children do not see themselves ever living in Mexico. His spouse's birth family is now all in California, and she is not as interested in returning to Mexico to live. Paco has accommodated these seemingly contradictory influences by constructing a life which sustains continuing involvement in both the *colonia* and the

Santa Barbara community. He has used various forms of informal sector work—mostly trading and transporting goods from one place to the other—that incorporate work activities on both sides of the border. He, along with several others in his social network, are involved in fixing up cars in California and transporting them to Mexico to start a transportation service. He is involved in constructing a home in the *colonia*,, and travels between Morelos and California numerous times each year.

Learning, for Paco, has been fairly separate in his mind from the ways he has constructed his life. As indicated previously, he is drawn toward Mexico and so has not sought out NFE classes to learn more English. On the other hand, he has learned English in the various work contexts (including earlier employment situations) sufficiently to be able to do the work of a self-employed gardener (who needs to communicate with home and apartment owners), and to negotiate with English-speakers as necessary in the informal sector work he now does. He has learned English informally, mostly in work situations over the years. Similarly, he has learned skills related to construction, gardening, auto repair, and the like, informally through working with friends in his social network (e.g. working on cars together) and informal apprenticeships (e.g., in gardening and construction areas). Some of these skills have become invaluable in creating ways to live in both locales, thus connecting both dimensions of life.

4. *Migration and Learning in Mexico.* But what about those in the social networks who have not migrated north? Their lives, too, are touched by migration processes. Some have migrated north for periods of time in the past, then returned to live primarily in Mexico. Many had family members who are in the US—siblings and/or grown children—have cultivated continuing links with those who continue to live in Mexico. Many families in the *colonia* were fairly evenly split, with half of the family members in the US and half in Mexico. Many families are dependent on economic remittances from the north for survival. The *colonia* has little available organized work opportunities. Many families sell food or other items on the street in front of their homes. Some (primarily men or young, single women) travel half an hour to a mid-sized city to find work. Locally-based economic activity is limited to selling in market stalls, small family businesses (restaurants, ice cream shops, small stores, etc.), and occasional work in a rose-producing agribusiness nearby. Exceptions include one school teacher and a bus driver, both with some postsecondary education. Others lack formal education necessary to enter most formal sector jobs. To illustrate how migration impacts life for those who reside in Mexico, I will share the story of the Morales Barajas family.

Patricia Morales, her husband Eliseo Barajas, and two of their children continue to live in the *colonia* in Morelos. The struggle between the newly-formed community (colonia) and the government in the early 1970s left one brother dead, another missing, but with legitimation and legalization of their land holdings. Patricia continues to live on her parcel of land, saying that it is in honor of her (dead) brother and their struggles that she continues to make her life there. With four children in the Santa Barbara area, two more in cities near the *colonia*, she and her two youngest children (in their early

twenties) continue to eke out their living in this community, assisted greatly by remittances from her children in Santa Barbara. Although she has never lived outside of Mexico, she did visit the Santa Barbara area for several months in recent years, but remained anxious to return home. She now vows to never return to the U.S. again, unless she can go with documentation. She expressed concern about the physical and social distance between her and her children in California. Her expression of this tension, however, included no desire for her to move to California. She seemed accepting of the separation and felt it necessary for her economic support as there is not adequate work in the area. In addition, her age and health limit her ability to work herself. She depends on her children living in California and sending financial remittances. Patricia's husband, Eliseo Barajas, divides his time between the *colonia* and his community of origin one to two hours away. His financial contributions to Patricia's well-being are minimal and sporadic. He himself also depends on remittances from their children, and from his children from a previous marriage, some of whom have also migrated.

Patricia's own learning experiences include no formal schooling, NFE in Mexico to learn Spanish literacy and acquire the equivalency of three years of primary school. The government offers adult education courses in both primary and secondary education equivalency. While she is proud of having participated in these programs, she is not confident of her abilities to use written Spanish, and rarely practices these skills. She underwent, but also resisted, informal learning when she went to California, as she didn't really want to be there. She has become quite accustomed to using telephones for transnational communication, and banking services for cashing money orders from her children and siblings in the US. Also important is how she has encouraged her children in their educational careers. Her youngest daughter completed secondary school (nine years) and began a technical education program. She now cares for her mother at home due to health concerns, and so does not work outside the home or attend school at the present time. A son attended a technical program in photography, went to California for one year, worked and saved money there, and with additional financial assistance from a brother in California, began a business in the *colonia*.

Typical for many in Patricia's generation in this Mexican community, nonformal learning has been fairly minimal, and has been limited to literacy and basic education. Informal education, although more subtle, has been more directly linked to living a transnational life. Even though she herself has not migrated, Patricia's life is well integrated into social networks that span the US/Mexican border. While her life's situation is somewhat shaped by global economic conditions, particularly those between the US and Mexico that have made it difficult for many in the lower economic classes to survive, she has been able to construct her life in ways that maintain transnational linkages, partly in an attempt to respond to the severe economic condition locally and partly to maintain family ties.

Like Patricia, Eliseo has engaged in little NFE. He also attended the basic education course to gain basic primary equivalency (3 years). He uses literacy skills

more often than Patricia, however, and is often seen working on word puzzles in a book designed for children. He especially likes the word search puzzles, but also does crossword and word scramble puzzles. Like Patricia, he uses the telephone more than letter writing for communication, and has structured his life in a way that accommodates continuing relations with children living in the US and in other parts of Mexico, as well as maintaining a residence that is principally his in the state of Mexico, and principally Patricia's in Morelos. Economic relations and family ties both respond to transnational dynamics, and shape the ways that transnational lives are constructed.

The concluding section explores the relevancy of transnationalism in the lives of these study participants, along with implications for learning and education.

V. *Conclusion: Transnationalism and Learning.*

While Paco talks of his life in dualistic terms: life in California vs. life in Mexico—it is evident that he experiences it not as a bifurcated life, but one life with multiple dimensions. He has created work situations which connect these multiple dimensions in meaningful ways. Basch, Schiller, and Szanton Blanc (1994) also find in their work that "individuals, communities, or states rarely identify themselves as transnational" (p. 8), even though their lives are not as such divided or segmented between the two countries but characterized by interconnected social relations and experiences. In their work, they have come to define "transnationalism" as:

> the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement. ... An essential element ... is the multiplicity of involvements that transmigrants' (sic) sustain in both home and host societies.. ... Transmigrants take actions, make decisions, and develop subjectivities and identities embedded in networks of relationships that connect them simultaneously to two or more nation-states. (Basch, Schiller, and Szanton Blanc, 1994, p. 7).

This context of nation-states is central. Identities of migrant populations, they find, continue to be rooted in nation-states. In this study, and, indeed, in other studies of Mexican immigrants (Kearney, 1995a, 1995b, 1991; Massey, 1991; Massey et al., 1987; Rouse, 1992, 1989), it is no different: we still talk of Mexicans or Mexican immigrants, or use other terms that relate people to their country of origin. At the same time, however, the deterritorialized nature of these nations-states are becoming more salient. Basch, Schiller, and Szanton Blanc (1994; Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton, 1992) find that Haiti recognizes the Haitian population in New York City, and formally acknowledges them as Haitian. For Mexico, this dynamic can be revealed through the efforts of the political parties, namely the PRI to court Mexican voters residing in the US. The current movement toward granting dual citizenship in Mexico (McDonnell, 1997) can be seen as an effort to acknowledge the realities of life for the many Mexican nationals living in the US and former Mexican nationals who have become American citizens but maintain ties to Mexico. Mexico is reaching out to incorporate these people into the definition of the Mexican nation-state, but in a way that acknowledges the transnational nature of life. "Transnational ties are taken as evidence that migrants continue to be members of the

state from which they originated" (Basch, Schiller, and Szanton Blanc, 1994, p. 8). As with other areas of scholarship, lived experience predates our academic understanding of the processes.

Education, too, tends to be defined and organized within national boundaries, usually at the state or local levels. Mexico's Instituto Nacional de Educación para Adultos (INEA, or National Institute of Adult Education) organizes the adult NFE courses designed to achieve primary and secondary education equivalency. The content of courses such as these in most regions of the world are reflective of the cultural, social, and political values and relations at the national level, sometimes with an effort to reflect the realities of particular groups within a country, but rarely acknowledging the issues relevant to transnational individuals and families. In the US, adult education is organized locally through school districts, with influences from state and national levels. While most NFE is intended for not only immigrant adults, some, such as ESL and some job training programs, do specifically serve this population by offering language courses in English or job training courses in occupations that tend to be populated by many immigrants. These courses, however, are focused on facilitating the transition of the immigrants to life in the US, with little attention to how transnational issues or experiences. This study is an initial look at how transnationalism shapes the lives of individuals who participate in a transnational social network, and how learning occurs in cooperation with or apart from those social processes. The meanings constructed by the individuals in this study of experiences with the transnational social networks and living and working in transnational contexts, are reflected in their life stories, and indications of incongruencies or lack of fit between educational opportunities and perceived needs. Following are a preliminary list of issues that could be considered by NFE programs in better serving transnational populations. Because informal learning is not institutionalized in educational organizations, recommendations are not indicated here. Instead, there is potential for incorporating into NFE some of the areas which are currently addressed informally, and also for more explicit acknowledgment of informal social networks and learning processes in nonformal settings so that learners could perhaps more consciously and deliberately direct their own informal learning processes.

1. Educators can become educated about the lives of transnational learners. With a broader and more detailed understanding of transnational social dynamics, including social networks, they could better plan courses and teach students in ways that are relevant and meaningful. Issues they could learn more about include:

a. Transnationalism: what is it? how is it lived? how do transnational individuals construct their lives transnationally? how does the global economy and politics affect the lives of transnational individuals and families? how do learning experiences of transnational adults (or children) relate to other dimensions of lived experience? what needs might be addressed through education?

b. Social networks: what are they? how do they operate? how do they change over time? who are the participants? how does each participant participate?

how do networks facilitate, shape, discourage, or construct learning experiences? how do they define relevant learning? how does learning occur within the network? what learning is valued by the network? what types of learning is the network especially good at promoting? what areas are more problematic?

Answers to questions such as these would lead an educator to more fully understand the lived experiences of transnational adults, and to take them into account in the classroom. Understanding dynamics that involve gender, age, and family relations within the networks is also important. These issues can reflect notions of shared resources as opposed to individual resources (see, for example, the work of Farr and Guerra, 1995; Guerra, 1995; Weinstein-Shr, 1994, 1986), as well as power relations that can shape the learning experiences for some individuals (see Peirce, 1995; Rockhill, 1991, 1987).

2. Educators can learn more about all three modes of education—informal, nonformal, and formal. What are they? how and where do they operate? how do they interrelate with each other?

With a clearer basis in all three modes—not just the mode with which the educator usually works—education can be organized to take all three into consideration, and to work in conjunction with each. In adult education, for example, informal processes of learning could inform what goes on in the classroom. Social network relations can be used as a basis for nonformal learning within the classroom, much as some primary schooling accommodates styles of relations found in homes. (Classic examples include the KEEP program —see Tharp and Gallimore, 1988—and the recommendations of Shirley Brice Heath, 1983.) In addition, teachers could link classroom-based learning with learning processes outside the classroom.

3. Educators could critique assumptions underlying their own philosophies and approaches to teaching adults. When educational programs intentionally or unintentionally promote assimilation, they are often blind or they ignore important dimensions of life of immigrant populations. Ways of constructing lives transnationally are de-emphasized or ignored, as are the complexities of all non-linear social and cultural processes. If assimilation is the intended outcome of an educational effort, that intention should be clear to the participants so they can choose whether this goals is in line with theirs. If educational programs intend instead to meet students where they are, and create learning experiences that are meaningful and address concerns that are not assimilative in intention, the educators and students should engage in open discussions that lead to the collaborative creation of dynamic and responsive programs.

Educational programs that are not assimilationist in intention, but that acknowledge the transnational social dynamics experienced by many immigrants today, could begin to create NFE programs that are transnational in nature. That is, collaborative or joint efforts could be made in Mexico and the US to serve the educational needs of transnational migrants. Bilingual forms of education of both sides of the border is one of many possibilities. Another might be job-related programs that acknowledge informal sector work as a common site for income generation for many

individuals and work with that situation to create more viable options that still work with and not against (or ignore) transnational life contexts.

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